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BATMAN®

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

I AM BLIND

BATMAN

With ROBIN THE BOY WONDER

"BLIND AS A... BAT?"

STORY BY FRANK ROBBINS; ART BY IRV NOVICK & JOE GIELLA

A BLIND MAN FOUND MURDERED... A CRYPTIC... ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE MESSAGE SCRATCHED ON A WALL BY THE DYING MAN'S CANE...

I AM BLIND

COMMISSIONER GORDON... THEY FOUND OUT I'M BATMAN!

AND DESPITE THE **REAL BATMAN'S** PROOF THAT THE DYING MAN'S HAND WAS **GUIDED** BY THE **KILLER**... HE IS "HELD ON SUSPICION" BY COMMISSIONER GORDON... CHARGED WITH BEING **HIS OWN IMPOSTOR!**

HELPLESS, THE **MASKED MAN-HUNTER** EMPLOYS A RUSE TO ENABLE **ROBIN** TO ESCAPE IN AN ATTEMPT TO TRACK DOWN THE "**KILLER**"... AT THE SAME TIME **PALMING** A TINY OBJECT FOUND IN THE DEAD MAN'S EAR!

OPERATION BLINDFOLD TO SCHEMER! ROBIN'S ESCAPED!

THIS IS NOT A HEARING AID! IT'S A FIXED-FREQUENCY RECEIVER... AND... ROBIN'S IN MORTAL DANGER!

GET HIM... DEAD OR ALIVE!

INDEED HE IS! AS ONE OF THE EVIL **SCHEMERS** "BLIND" **SPOTTERS** STAKED-OUT AROUND **GOTHAM CITY** FIRES A MINI-MISSILE AT THE **BOY WONDER!**...

WE'RE UNDER ATTACK! BUT... WE HAVEN'T EVEN **PICKED** UP THE **GOLD** YET!

AN' BOTH THE BANK... AND OUR ROUTE HAVE BEEN KEPT TOP SECRET! TAKE EVASIVE... FULL SPEED!

JOE'S

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AND SECONDS LATER, TO AVOID HITTING THE ARMORED TRUCK, COMMISSIONER GORDON'S CAR HITS A LAMPPOST... AND BATMAN TUMBLES OUT!

KERASH

I'M... FREE! GOT TO GET AWAY... SAVE ROBIN! THIS TRANSMITTER-CANE MAY COME IN HANDY!

ESCAPING, BATMAN IS STUNNED IN A COLLISION WITH ONE OF THE SCHEMER'S MEN, AS THE "MAN WITH THE COMPUTER-BRAIN" RECEIVES A REPORT FROM ONE OF HIS SPOTTERS...

"OBJECTIVE" TRUCK SPEEDING TOWARD GRID-AREA 11...

FIRST FEDERAL BANK

THEN THEIR TARGET IS... THE FIRST FEDERAL BANK! CALL IN ALL STAKE-OUTS... CONVERGE ON TARGET USING OPERATIONAL PLAN "A"! AT THE SAME TIME...

WHILE IN A DANK ALLEY, BATMAN'S HEAD QUICKLY CLEARS AS THE GRIM ORDERS COME THROUGH...

... YOU CAN POLISH OFF ROBIN!

AS SOON AS I POLISH OFF NUMBER ONE-- BATMAN! HAW! HAW!

IN AN INSTINCTIVE PROTECTIVE GESTURE, THE CAPED CRUSADER THROWS HIS HANDCUFFED HANDS UP IN FRONT OF HIMSELF... AT THE SAME TIME KICKING UPWARD AND...

KNEE

TZUNG

BAM!

KYAH

I'VE HEARD ENOUGH "POLISH" JOKES TO DATE! BUT THANKS FOR SHINING UP MY BRACELETS!

JEWELRY LIKE THIS ISN'T WHAT IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE!

AND WHEN YOU PLAY BALL WITH ME... ONE STRIKE AT BAT... AND YOU'RE-- OUT!

K-LUNC

BUT NO SOONER DOES THE COWLED CRIME-FIGHTER ELIMINATE ONE OPPONENT, THAN...

THERE HE IS...COMMISSIONER GORDON! AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STEPS...!

OH...NO! I'D FORGOTTEN... I'M STILL A FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE! AND I MUSTN'T BE RECAPTURED-- NOW!

AND AS HIS ARMED PURSUERS CLOSE IN...

ROBIN'S LIFE MAY DEPEND ON MY STAYING... AT LIBERTY! WAIT! THERE IS A WAY!

AT THAT MOMENT, ROBIN'S LIFE IS VERY MUCH IN NEED OF SAVING, AS THE CAREENING ARMORED TRUCK SLEWS TO A PANIC-STOP AT THE FIRST FEDERAL BANK!

ABOUT TO BECOME VICTIM ... OF IMMUTABLE LAW OF PHYSICS... THAT AN OBJECT DETACHED FROM MOVING OBJECT SUDDENLY BROUGHT TO REST...

...CONTINUES ON AT THE SAME SPEED AS BEFORE!

FIRST FEDERAL BANK

ZIIIP

SCREECH

NO PARKING

UNLESS... SPEED IS ABSORBED BY AN OBJECT IMPARTING PROGRESSIVE DECELERATION TO THE SPEEDING OBJECT!

FIRST

SIGHT

TO GO

U.S.

TY

ZOOF!

IRONIC... I SHOULD BE SAVED BY THE SAME CHARACTERS THAT ARE TRYING TO DESTROY ME!

NOW TO FIND A GOOD HIDDEN VANTAGE POINT... WHERE I CAN SEE WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE BANK!

FIRST FEDERAL WELCOME TO GOTHAM

THEY'RE LOADING THE ARMORED CAR WITH... GOLD INGOTS! MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH!

HURRY IT UP! SOMEONE TOOK A POT-SHOT AT US COMING HERE...! MIGHT BE SHEER ACCIDENT, BUT I'M EDGY!

FIRST FEDERAL

AN EDGINESS THAT IS QUITE JUSTIFIED, AS FROM ALL CORNERS OF GOTHAM CITY AN ARMY OF THE SCHEMER'S BLIND-SPOTTERS CONVERGES ON THE BANK SQUARE!...

TAP. TAP. TAP. TAP. TAP.!

ALARMED BY THE SUDDEN MENACE OF DISTANT CANES TAPPING... COMING CLOSER... AND CLOSER... THE BOY WONDER TAKES COVER JUST IN TIME!...

TAP. TAP.!

THE CRESCENDO OF APPROACHING TAPS... SUDDENLY STOPS! EQUALLY ALARMED, THE GUARDS STARE...

LIKE THEY CAME OUT OF NOWHERE! W-WHAT ARE THOSE BLIND MEN STARING AT?

I AM BLIND

AND AS MORE MEMBERS OF OPERATION-BLINDFOLD JOIN THEIR SILENTLY LINED-UP COLLEAGUES...

THEY'RE B-BLOCKING THE STREETS OUT OF HERE! WHAT'RE THEY... BLIND OR SOMETHIN'? ER... I MEAN...

I KNOW WHAT Y'MEAN... BUT WHAT ARE THEY... JUST STANDIN' THERE FOR?

FIRST FE... BANK

AND WHILE THIS TENSION MOUNTS, WE SWITCH TO ANOTHER TENSE SITUATION, AS

COMMISSIONER GORDON! WE'VE GOT HIM... BATMAN!

IS IT POSSIBLE? HAS BATMAN BEEN RETAKEN? WHO WILL DEFEAT THE EVIL SCHEMER'S PLANS NOW?

THAT'S THE "IMPOSTOR"! ALL RIGHT! WHO CLOUTED HIM?

HE DID...

B-BATMAN...? I-I DIDN'T KNOW--

H-HE RAN INTO ME... THOUGHT I WAS BEING ASSAULTED-- S-SO I... SWUNG! B-BUT... YOU SAID -- IMPOSTOR!

OF COURSE, YOU POOR MAN... YOU CAN'T SEE!

I AM BL...

AND A PRETTY LOW ONE, TOO... ATTACKING A BLIND MAN! WE'LL THROW THE BOOK AT HIM!

WHAT GOES ON HERE? HOW DID THE SCHEMER'S "BLIND" MAN REGAIN THE UPPER HAND OVER THE CAPED CRUSADER?

AND AS THE POLICE DRAG THE UNRESISTING BATMAN AWAY...

UNFORTUNATELY THERE'S NO REWARD OUT FOR THIS... DISGUSTING CREATURE! BUT, PLEASE ACCEPT MY *PERSONAL* GRATITUDE!

CLINK

I AM BLIND

YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T, KIND SIR! I JUST DID MY DUTY AS A *GOTHAM* CITIZEN!

BUT NO SOONER ARE THEY OUT OF... SIGHT!

THAT QUICK-CHANGE WAS WORTH THE COST OF ONE *BATMAN* OUTFIT! AT LEAST I'VE DELIVERED *ONE* OF THE *SCHEMER'S* MEN INTO POLICE HANDS...

I AM

NOW TO SAVE *ROBIN*... AND ROUND UP THE OTHERS! STRANGE GLASSES... THESE! WONDERED HOW THOSE PHONEY BLIND MEN COULD SEE THROUGH THEM...

BEFORE, I COULD MAKE OUT DIMLY-LIT OBJECTS QUITE PLAINLY... BUT NOW... LOOKING DIRECTLY INTO A BLINDING MERCURY ARC VAPOR LAMP...

IT'S JUST A DULL GLOW! WHICH MEANS... THESE LENSES ARE MADE OF AUTOMATICALLY-ADJUSTING PHOTO-SENSITIVE MATERIAL!*

*HIGH-SENSITIVE LENSES THAT GET DARKER WHEN EXPOSED TO BRIGHTER LIGHT-SOURCES!

WHILE BACK IN THE BANK SQUARE... AS THE LAST OF THE GOLD-BULLION IS LOADED ABOARD THE ARMORED TRUCK...

SO *THAT* WAS WHAT THE BLIND MEN WERE *WAITING* FOR... A *'COPTER!*

QUICK, JOE... LOCK UP THE BACK! I'LL START THE MOTOR!

FIRST FEDERAL BANK

CHUCKA-CHUCKA-CHUCKA

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

AT THE SOUND OF THE CHOPPER, ROBIN CASTS ALL CAUTION TO THE WINDS, AS...

ARE THEY GONNA... BOMB... THE BANK-TRUCK? GOTTA STOP 'EM... SOMEHOW...

R-ROBIN?

I AM BLIND

FIRED WITH RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION, THE BOY WONDER COMES OUT OF COVER, JUST AS...

NO, NO-- ROBIN! HOLD IT...

NO BLIND BAT... HOLDS... ME!

I AM BLIND

LIKE AN ALL-AMERICAN, ROBIN LINE-BACKS HIS WAY THROUGH A WALL OF LIVING FLESH...

GOTTA GIVE THOSE BANK-GUARDS... A HAND!

UHNN! THERE ARE APT PUPILS... AND APT PUPILS!

I AM BLIND

BUT JUST AS HE PLUNGES THROUGH... THE SCHEMER'S 'COPTER DROPS ITS SECRET WEAPON... A BLINDING SUPER-MAGNESIUM FLARE!

AND AS THE LONG-PERSISTANCE FLARE SLOWLY DRIFTS DOWN...THE GUARDS ARE STOPPED SHORT IN THEIR TRACKS-- BLINDED!

I--I'M BLIND! CAN'T SEE!

N-NEITHER CAN I...

FEDER

FIRS

AND ALSO CAUGHT POINT-BLANK BY THE SUPER-BRILLIANT FLASH, THE BOY WONDER REELS AROUND... UNSEEING!

POOR ROBIN... SO THAT'S THE SECRET OF THIS WHOLE "BLIND-FOLD" OPERATION...

"BLIND MAN" BRUCE CAN STILL SEE? HOW IS IT POSSIBLE...?

BUT HOW CAN I DEFEAT THIS DIABOLIC MOB...?

THE GLASSES! THE PHOTO-SENSITIVE LENSES AUTOMATICALLY ADJUST TO SHIELD US FROM THE INTENSE GLARE! WHILE UNGUARDED EYES...

SUDDENLY, BRUCE'S WHIRLING THOUGHTS CATALYZE... AND A DARING PLAN FORMS IN HIS MASTER MIND! THEN, PUTTING THOUGHTS INTO ACTION...

I WANT TWO GIANT STEPS LEAD TO THAT ARMORED TRUCK!... LET'S PLAY... "JOHNNY ON THE PONY"!

I AM BLIND

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED
TO ATTEND THE WEDDING
OF LOIS LANE AND SUPERMAN
IN THE GIANT LOIS LANE ISSUE
ON SALE JULY 11th,
AT YOUR NEWSDEALER!

DC SUPERMAN NATIONAL COMICS

80 pg. GIANT G 51 All-Wedding Issue

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

LOIS LANE

OCT. NO. 86

25¢

Featuring LOIS' SCHEMES AND DREAMS TO MARRY SUPERMAN!

JUST MARRIED
SHE WEDS HIM IN HIS CLARK KENT IDENTITY!
SHE ADOPTS A SECRET IDENTITY OF HER OWN!
SHE EVEN MAKES A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL!

BE BACK FOR YOU LATER, BUD! NOW... THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO STOP THIS HORDE!

HEY...! WHATSA-MATTER... YA BLIND?

YE-AH... YOU'RE ONE OF US!

THAT JUST TAKES CARE OF A FEW, BATMAN! BUT HOW CAN YOU STOP THE WHOLE MOB?

THIS IS HOW, DOUBTERS! HURTLING AT FULL TILT, THE CAPELESS CRUSADER PLOWS INTO A HYDRANT... KNOCKING IT COMPLETELY OFF! CONTINUING ON, HE PLANTS THE TRUCK SQUARELY OVER IT... AND THE GEYSER SPURTS IN ALL DIRECTIONS WITH SLEDGE-HAMMER FORCE!

CORRECTION... YOU'RE NOT PLAYING ON MY TEAM! LEAST NOT... TILL YOU SCRUB UP A BIT!

ANYWAY... THIS GAME IS CALLED ON ACCOUNT OF RAIN! IT'S A... WASH-OUT! BY COURTESY OF BATMAN!

AND THEN THE BLINDING FLARE DROPS INTO THE FLOODED SQUARE... FIZZLES... AND DIES! BATMAN BROADCASTS A MESSAGE VIA HIS TRANSMITTER-CANE TO THE HOVERING 'COPTER...

YOUR WHOLE OPERATION'S A FIZZLE, SCHEMER... JUST LIKE THAT DEAD "BLUNDER"! SO KNOCK IT OFF... WHILE YOU'RE AHEAD!

PHZZT

WHILE ABOVE... CORRECTION... BATMAN!

PHASE 1 OF THE GAME IS YOURS...! BUT NOW WE ENTER PHASE 2! RIGHT, BRAIN DRAIN?

WHOO-HOO! HOOT! HOOT!

QUICKLY BRUCE (BATMAN) WAYNE BACKS THE TRUCK AROUND TO THE GUARDS...

CAN YOU SEE WELL ENOUGH TO DRIVE?

VISION'S KINDA... SPOTTY, BUT--

THEN... HOP IN!

WHOOSH

LEAPING OFF, BRUCE TURNS THE TRUCK OVER TO THE GUARDS... AND... BUTTONED-UP, IT ROARS AWAY TOWARD THE AIRPORT...

SCHEMER TO OPERATION-- BLINDFOLD... PLAN A--ABORTED! SWITCH TO PLAN B! STEP 1... PICK UP ROBIN!

WHAT NEW EVIL HAS THE SCHEMER AND HIS MALEVOLENT COHORTS HATCHED? HIS FIRST SCHEME LAID ONE BIG OWL EGG! WHAT NOW ?

AS BRUCE TRIES TO SPEED TO **ROBIN'S** RESCUE, HIS PROGRESS IS IMPEDED BY THE STILL-RUSHING WATER...

CAN'T LET **SCHEMER'S** MALICIOUS ORDER BE CARRIED OUT! GOTTA HELP...THAT POOR, HALF-BLINDED...KID...

I AM BLIND

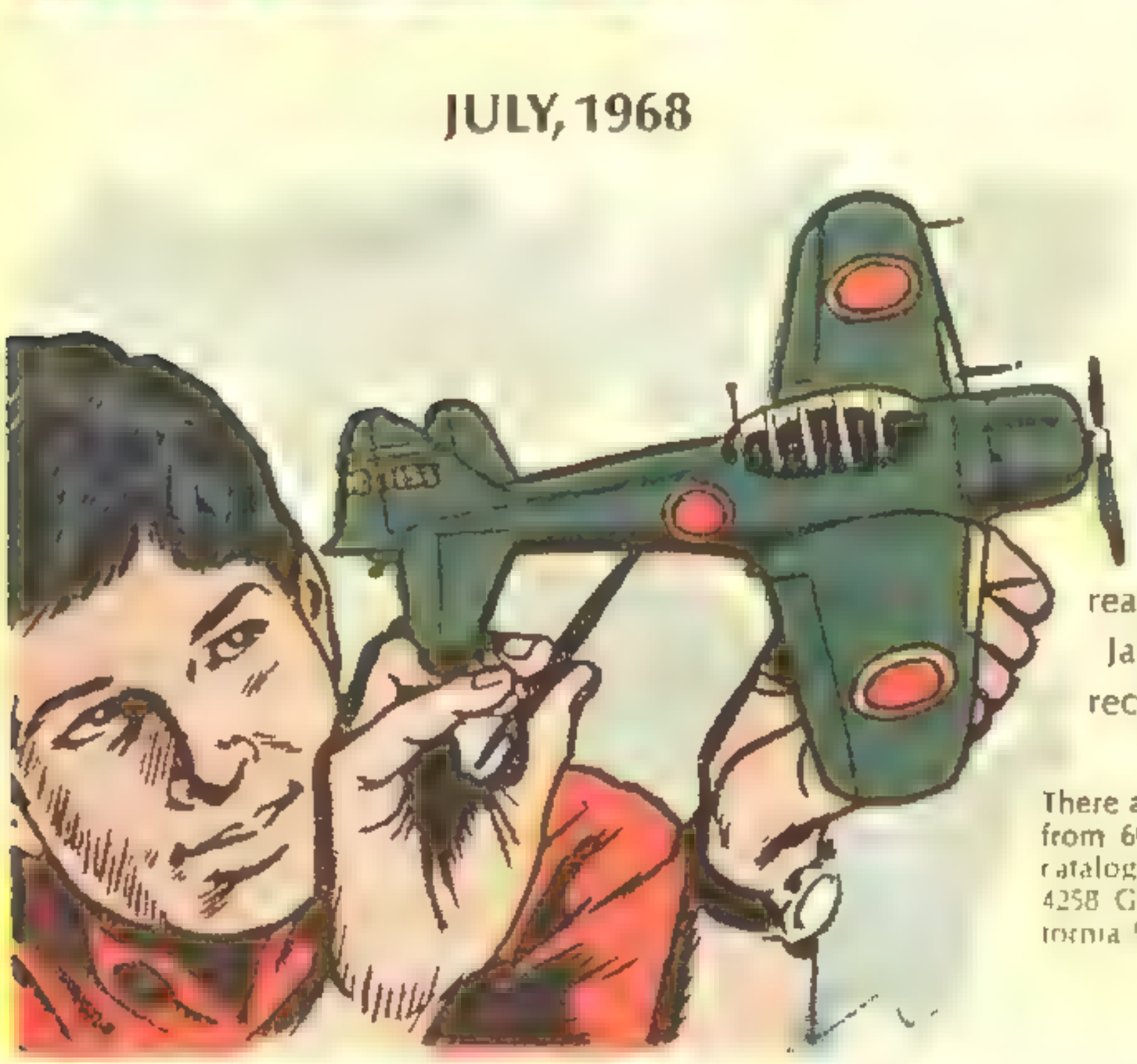
WHILE AT A DISTANCE THAT COULD BE **OCEANS** AWAY...THE OVERWHELMED, BUT FIERCELY BATTLING **BOY WONDER** PUTS UP A DETERMINED... BUT FUTILE ...STRUGGLE!...

I AM BLI

CAN'T SEE MUCH, BUT... ENOUGH TO COUNTER-PUNCH YOU BLIND BULLIES!

HIS COURAGE MORE THAN HIS STRENGTH CAN MATCH, THE **TEEN TITAN** IS LIFTED AWAY...A LOSER TO STACKED ODDS! WHAT GRIM ROLE HAS HE BEEN SELECTED TO PLAY IN THE **SCHEMER'S** FOUL PLAN **B**? AFTER A SHORT SPONSOR-SELECTED INTERMISSION... WE SHALL SEE... ON THE NEXT PAGE!

JULY, 1968



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"BLIND AS A... BAT?" PART 2

AND, AS SUDDENLY AND SILENTLY AS THEY CAME... THE MEMBERS OF **OPERATION—BLINDFOLD** HAVE FADED AWAY... LEAVING A FRUSTRATED AND ANGRY BRUCE (BATMAN) WAYNE ALONE IN THE FLOODED SQUARE...

I AM BLIND

FIRST FEDERAL B

CAN'T HELP **ROBIN** THIS WAY! NEED BIG HELP IN A HURRY!

A SHORT TIME LATER, IN RESPONSE TO BRUCE'S URGENT PHONE CALL...

OH MY, MASTER WAYNE... YOU'LL CATCH YOUR DEATH PADDLING ABOUT IN THAT PUDDLE! COME UP AT ONCE, SIR... I HAVE A FRESH CHANGE OF CLOTHING WAITING!

GOOD OLD ALFRED... MY FAITHFUL BUTLER... AND MOTHER-HEN!

GLAD YOU HAD MY OTHER **BATMAN** OUTFIT LAID OUT... GAVE MINE TO A ...ER: "BLIND" MAN!

...AND WHAT HAPPENED TO POOR YOUNG MASTER DICK? YOUR CALL WAS SO BRIEF... WH-WHERE IS HE NOW?

SCUTTLED BY THE **SCHEMER**, ALFRED! PROBABLY HEADED FOR THE AIRPORT NOW FOR ANOTHER STAB AT THE GOLD-BULLION SHIPMENT!

WHILE APPROACHING THE MARSHES BORDERING **GOTHAM CITY BAY**... SITE OF GOTHAM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT...

SOON, YOUNG **ROBIN**... YOU WILL SEE THE WIZARDRY OF THE **SCHEMER'S** WILY WITS... IN ACTION!

AND, AS DAWN BREAKS...

NOW WE APPROACH MY BASE OF OPERATIONS! SOON WE WILL BE WHERE EVEN YOUR *FEARLESS FERRET* CANNOT FIND YOU!

I--I SEE NOTHING BUT... SEA MARSHES! W-WHERE--?

OPERATION BLINDFOLD HAS A MOST APT... AND... *WELL-NAMED* ...*HIDE-OUT!* HA! HA!

AS THE HATCH COVERS OPEN, AN ELEVATOR RISES TO MEET THE DESCENDING 'COPTER! THEN, ITS ROTOR-BLADES FOLDED... THE HELIPAD GOES DOWN, SWALLOWING *ROBIN* AND THE *SCHEMER!*

AND, ON A TRANSMITTED SIGNAL FROM THE *SCHEMER'S* 'COPTER... THE "DUCK BLIND" SUDDENLY RISES! DISCLOSING...

A MOST INGENIOUS "COVER", EH, *ROBIN?* FLOATING DUCK *DECOYS*, AND... MY PERISCOPE AND ANTENNA DISGUISED AS-- *SHOTGUN BARRELS!*

SUBMERGED, ROBIN'S UNDERWATER PRISON ONCE MORE GREETS THE CASUAL EYE AS A PEACEFUL, SYLVAN, HUNTER'S RETREAT...

AND NOW, I SUPPOSE, YOUR TEEN-AGE CURIOSITY KNOWS NO BOUNDS! A GLANCE THROUGH THIS PERISCOPE SHOULD SATISFY THAT...

AND, BELOW...

SUFFERIN' SUBS! Y-YOU CAN'T... SINK THAT!

OH...? CAN'T I...?

HOOT! HOOT!

A MOST ASTUTE QUERY FROM THE **BOY WONDER**... AS YOU CAN PLAINLY SEE! HOW CAN THE **SCHEMER SINK**... A JET-CARGO PLANE?...

HA! THOSE WOULD-BE GENIUSES HOPE TO OUTSMART THE **SCHEMER** BY DRIVING THE GOLD-TRUCK DIRECTLY INTO THE AIR-TRANSPORT... WITH AN UNBREAKABLE ARMED RING AROUND IT! HA! HA!

JET CARGO

THE **SCHEMER** THROWS A SWITCH... A **SILO** HATCH-COVER OPENS AND...

BUT ONCE IT **TAKES OFF**, I KNOCK IT DOWN WITH MY **MINI-POLARIS** TYPE MISSILE! **SALVAGING** THE TREASURE UNDERWATER WITH THIS **SUB**... WILL BE CHILD'S PLAY!

I'D SAY IT'S RATHER CLEVER! THERE'S NOT A CHANCE YOU CAN...

THE **SCHEMER** LEAVES NOTHING TO CHANCE! SURE--THE GOLD SHIPMENT IS INVULNERABLE ON THE GROUND...

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

YOUR PLAN IS VICIOUS... BUT YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH IT!

AND WHO'S TO STOP ME... BATMAN? WITH HIS PRECIOUS TEEN-TODDLER IN MY TENDER CLUTCHES? HA! HA!

HOO-HOOT!

I FEAR... THAT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, SIR... I'D MUCH PREFER BEING WITH THOSE DUCK "NIMRODS" BELOW!

OF COURSE... I'D MUCH PREFER-- GROUSE!

WHILE... APPROACHING GOTHAM AIRPORT...

HOW ARE WE GOING TO COPE WITH THIS SITUATION, MASTER BRUCE?

FIRST, ALFRED... WE'RE GOING TO CASE THE AIRFIELD GOLD-LOADING AREA! SEE IF WE CAN SPOT WHERE THE SCHEMER MIGHT MASS HIS FORCES FOR AN ATTACK!

I'D MUCH PREFER LESS... OF YOUR GROUSING, ALFRED! WE HAVE TO KEEP OUR WITS ABOUT US RIGHT NOW...

BUT THEIR OVER-FLIGHT OF THE SENSITIVE AREA IS GREETED WITH AN ALERT WARNING...

I SAY, SIR... THEY'RE TRYING TO PUT... HOLES IN OUR WITS!

BULLY FOR THEM,.. ALFRED... THEY'RE ON THEIR TOES! LEAST NOW... WE CAN BE SURE THE SCHEMER WON'T TRY A 'COPTER ASSAULT!

POW!

POW-

POW-POW!

AND THAT "RING OF STEEL" AROUND THE CARGO PLANE WILL PREVENT A GROUND ATTACK... TILL SHE'S SAFELY OFF AND AWAY! WHAT OTHER WAY CAN THE SCHEMER HIT THEM?

I-I CAN'T GUESS, SIR! WE'RE HAVING AS MUCH LUCK AS THOSE HUNTERS BELOW, IN FINDING FLYING DUCKS!

WHILE IN THE INNOCENT-LOOKING SHELTER BELOW... THE "SHOTGUN" PERISCOPE TRAVERSES, AND...

LOADING COMPLETED! PLANE ABOUT TO TAXI FOR TAKE-OFF... BATTLE STATIONS!

WHAT DID YOU SAY, ALFRED--?

I-I SAY, SIR... WHAT DID I JUST SAY?

OH, I HAVE IT, SIR! AS MUCH LUCK AS THOSE HUNTERS BELOW... FINDING-- AH, THAT'S IT--FLYING DUCKS!

AND... AND WHEN DID THE HUNTING SEASON OPEN AROUND GOTHAM CITY, ALFRED?

WHY, SIR--IT HASN'T AS YET! IN FACT...

IN FACT, IT STARTS NEXT MONTH! WHICH MEANS... EITHER THOSE JOKERS BACK THERE ARE POACHERS, OR...

...THAT "DUCK BLIND" IS A BLIND FOR SOMETHING ELSE! AND IF I DIG THE SCHEMER'S TWISTED SENSE OF HUMOR...

...IT COULD BE A COVER FOR OPERATION-BLINDFOLD'S HIDE-OUT!

I SAY! A BLIND FOR A BLIND FOLD... OF FOUL FOWL!

KEEP'ER HOVERING, ALFRED!... IF I YANK *ONCE*, PULL ME UP REAL QUICK! IF *TWICE*... TAKE OFF *WITHOUT* ME... AND KEEP GOING!

RATHER NASTY ALTER-NATIVE, SIR! H-HOPE THOSE "DECOYS" AREN'T LURING THE WRONG BIRD!

WHILE BELOW ***BATMAN'S*** *GROPING FEET...*

GOLD-PLANE LINING UP ON RUNWAY FOR TAKE-OFF! SONAR-MAN, SWITCH ON OUR SUPER-SENSITIVE SONIC-DETECTOR...

WE'LL USE THE *SOUND* OF ITS ENGINES TO *GUIDE* OUR *MINI-POLARIS* TO ITS TARGET WHEN SHE'S AIRBORNE!

BUT, NO SOONER IS THE ULTRA-SENSITIVE DETECTOR SWITCHED ON, THAN...

B-BRRK! ATAK!

AITCH! 'C-COPTER ... DIRECTLY ***OVERHEAD*** *... HOVERING!!*

W-WHA...? COULD ONLY BE...

WHILE ABOVE, THE ***CAPED CRUSADER*** *LANDS ON CAT'S-FEET... SILENTLY!*

*... **BATMAN'S** **BATCOPTER!** HIS PRESENCE HERE COULD DISRUPT OUR PLAN!*

*A... CONNING TOWER! SO THAT'S HIS HIDE-OUT! AND **ROBIN** MUST BE INSIDE!*

NO TIME TO COPE WITH *BATMAN* NOW... BUT WE *CAN* PREVENT HIS INTERFERING...!

TAKE *ROBIN* AND...

*HOW CAN I GET **TO** HIM? LOCKED FROM INSIDE...*

EH? SUB... SURFACING! IF THEY SPOT MY 'COPTER OVERHEAD...

AM

R

*IS **BATMAN** GOING TO GIVE THE **FATAL SIGNAL**... THAT WILL LEAVE HIM ALONE ON THE SUB?*

TWO... YANKS! WHICH IS MORE THAN ONE BRITISHER... CAN STAND! OH, MASTER BRUCE... MUST I LEAVE YOU?

AS ALFRED RELUCTANTLY REELS IN THE BAT-CABLE... THE SUB SURFACES!

OH, POOR MASTER... TRAPPED ON THAT UGLY SEA MONSTER!

F'R PETE'S SAKE, ALFRED-- GET GOING--OR YOU'LL BE SHOT DOWN!

AND AS ALFRED, IN DESPAIR, STARTS TO SLOWLY WITHDRAW FROM THE SCENE...

AS THE HELIPAD ELEVATOR COMES INTO VIEW...

OPEN HELIPAD HATCH! RAISE ELEVATOR...

NOW HEAR THIS... BATMAN... HEAR THIS! IF YOU MAKE ONE MOVE IN OUR DIRECTION...

...WE'LL SUBMERGE! NEEDLESS TO SAY... YOUR JUNIOR CRIME-FIGHTER'S DAYS WILL BE OVER-- AND UNDER!

HE THINKS I'M ABOARD THE BATCOPTER... WHICH COULD GIVE ME AN ADVANTAGE! BUT HOW DO I MOVE AGAINST HIM WITH ROBIN SO VULNERABLE FOR REPRISAL?

AND AS THE GOLD-CARRIER STARTS DOWN THE RUNWAY...

SONIC-DETECTOR REVEALS TAKE-OFF, SCHEMER!

PREPARE MISSILE FOR FIRING! MUST HIT PLANE WHEN WELL OVER BAY!

THAT PLANE'LL BE A SITTING DUCK... WITH MORE LIVES AT STAKE THAN JUST ROBIN'S!

HMM! THAT SHOT-GUN MAY BE THE ANSWER!

SWAP

GOTTA MOVE NOW!

THE SCHEMER CUED ME IN WITH THAT--"OVER AND UNDER"!

IF YOU LOST THE CLUE... OR CUE... READER, SEE LAST PANEL OF PREVIOUS PAGE!

AS THE PLANE TAKES OFF, AND THE SCHEMER STARTS HIS COUNT-DOWN... BATMAN SPRINGS INTO ACTION...

...EIGHT... SEVEN ...SIX...

WHOO-HOOT!

SHALL I SAY FIRE?

BATMAN...!? GET 'IM... BRAIN-DRAIN!

I CAN STILL FIRE THE MISSILE FROM UNDERWATER!

BLAM

AS THE OUTLANDISH OWL COMES AT HIM, TALONS AND BEAK GLEAMING WITH AVID ANTICIPATION... BATMAN, CAUGHT OFF BALANCE, FIRES BOTH BARRELS... HARMLESSLY INTO THE SKY!

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

DESPERATELY TRYING TO HANG ON, THE CAPED CRUSADER FENDS OFF-- WITH HIS FREE HAND-- THE PERSISTENT NIGHT-HUNTER, TRYING TO GET AT HIS EYES...

BLASTED BIRD... I CAN'T LET SCHEMER SUBMERGE OR ROBIN IS DEAD!

SUDDENLY... FROM OUT OF NOWHERE...ASSISTANCE COMES!

KLUNK

HOOT!

A BATCABLE BULL'S-EYE! OR RATHER I SHOULD SAY... OWL'S-EYE! FINE GROUSE-HUNT THIS TURNED OUT TO BE!

GOOD OLD ALFRED! ALWAYS IN THE NICK... THE PERFECT BUTLER!

BUT THAT SHORT "NICK OF TIME" COULD BE FATAL, AS...

THAT HATCH-COVER MUSTN'T SHUT, OR...

SNATCHING THE SHOTGUN OUT OF ITS SWIVEL-MOUNT...

I'M NOT GETTING SHUT OUT OF THIS GAME, SCHEMER! THERE'S ANOTHER TURN AT BAT... AND IT'S GOING TO BE BATMAN'S!

OW-W!

KLANG!

SLING

WITH A MIGHTY PULL, THE **MASKED MANHUNTER** BRINGS A GASPING **SCHEMER** OUT OF HIS HAVEN, LIKE A FISH OUT OF WATER...

YOU'RE *TOO BIG* TO THROW BACK, SO...

ZOK

...I'LL HAVE TO PREPARE YOU FOR-- THE **FRYING PAN!**

PUTTING THE **BATCOPTER** ON AUTOMATIC PILOT, ALFRED ASSAYS A RESCUE OF THE PINIONED **ROBIN**, AS OUT OF A DECK-HATCH...

HAVE YOU OUT OF THESE NASTY CLAMPS IN A SECOND, YOUNG **ROBIN!**

HURRY, ALFRED! THOSE AREN'T JUST **CABIN-BOYS** BRINGING OUR FISH-'N'-CHIPS!

USING THE MISSILE ON ITS SWIVEL-MOUNT AS A GIANT MERRY-GO-ROUND, THE **TEEN TITAN** TEARS INTO THE TEETERING THREATS!

ZAP

ZOK

TIME FOR A CLEAN SWEEP... YOU DECK SWABS!

CROWK

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

WHILE ATOP THE CONNING TOWER, THE CAPED CRUSADER CUTS A WIDE SWATH IN A WALL OF MENACING FLESH, USING A LIVING MAN-BAT!

THAT'S USING YOUR HEAD, SCHEMER... FOR A GOOD PURPOSE! AND NEXT TIME 'ROUND... YOU BETTER SETTLE FOR THE BRASS RING, 'CAUSE--

TCHOK!

KLUNK

PLATZ!

... THE GOLD WENT THATAWAY!

LATER... AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

LOOKS LIKE THE SCHEMER SCHEMED HIMSELF INTO JAIL EH, BATMAN... ROBIN?

WITH A SLIGHT ASSIST FROM A PAIR OF "IMPOSTORS" COMMISSIONER GORDON?

DON'T RUB IT IN... PLEASE? I MUST ADMIT THE MURDERED "BLIND-MAN" PLANT THREW ME!

FUNNY, YOUNG MASTER ROBIN... HOW EVEN THOUGH NASTY BLIGHTERS ALWAYS GET IT IN THE END--THEY DON'T GET IT! THE LOOT... THE SWAG... GET IT? THE JOKE... THAT IS? HAW!

HAW... YOURSELF, ALFRED!

...UNTIL WE LATCHED ON TO THIS *PHONEY* YOU DRESSED IN *YOUR OUTFIT, BATMAN!* HE CONFESSED THAT THE *REAL* BLIND MAN... THE VICTIM...

... HAD BEEN HIRED BY THE *SCHEMER* TO *TRAIN* THE MEMBERS OF HIS MOB HOW TO ACT BLIND... SO THEY COULD FOOL *ANYONE*...

...LIKE THEY DID *YOU*, COMMISSIONER GORDON!

PRECISELY, *ROBIN!* THEN... BECAUSE THE SIGHTLESS MAN *KNEW TOO MUCH...* AND BECAUSE THE *SCHEMER* WANTED ME TO THINK...

...I WAS DEAD, SO YOU'D PUT ME AWAY AS AN *IMPOSTOR...* AND LEAVE THE FIELD CLEAR FOR HIS NEFARIOUS *OPERATION-BLINDFOLD!*

HE SURE PULLED THE WOOL OVER MY EYES, MEN!

WHICH PROVES YOU SHOULDN'T VIEW THE WORLD WITH... BLINDERS ON!

OR BELIEVE... ALL *BATS* ARE-- *BLIND!*

The End

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LOOK FOR THIS COUPON IN ALL MAY THROUGH OCTOBER ISSUES

LETTERS TO THE BATCAVE

Dear Editor:

For once, instead of giving a detailed analysis of a comic, I'd like to give my first impressions of it. These impressions are received the very first time one peruses an issue.

Naturally, the cover is the *very* first thing that hits a person, and the cover of *Batman* #201 intrigued me. It definitely was *not* done by Carmine Infantino, but I did not dwell on it. Eagerly, I opened the magazine to discover just why *Gotham City* policemen were gunning for *Batman*. About fifteen minutes later, I put it down and felt three different things, all at the same time: enjoyment, satisfaction, expectation.

Enjoyment because the issue was fun; all through "Batman's Gangland Guardians" was plenty of *Bat*-action featuring some mob trying to wipe out our *Caped Crusader*—while seven of his cleverest foes try to prevent it—and succeeding. And, best of all, not once through the entire tale did *Batman* suspect just who it was helping him.

Now to my second impressionistic feeling: *satisfaction*. I was glad that the story hadn't turned into the cliché proposed by the cover—that of *Batman* momentarily being a criminal and having a short fight for his life against the forces he's always worked hand-in-hand with. Also *satisfaction* because *Batman didn't*, as I expected, crash into the hideaway of the *Gangland Guardians* on the last page of the story.

And this is where *expectation* comes in, for *Batman* now has a grand total of eight foes to match wits with in issues to come—and any one of these eight have been enough in the past to keep *Batman* busy for at least half an issue.

Ah, yes—there is one other impression I received when I first read this issue. In the lettercol we fans were challenged to spot this issue's cover artist, and as soon as I took another look at the cover one name popped into my head—Joe Giella. The more I thought about it, the more it seemed to fit: it looked like Giella all the way—pencils and inks. (And since I saw mentioned in a fanzine that Joe Giella will be doing future work on *Batman*, how could I possibly be wrong?)

—Jim Vlcko, Scarboro, Ont., Can.

(How you could possibly be *so* wrong is obligingly revealed by another cover-artist-spotter—who used *Batman*-technique to solve the problem.—*Editor*)

******

Dear Editor:

I believe I have solved the guess-the-artist-puzzle for the cover of *Batman* #201 — thanks to a neat bit of deduction! On the cover of *Detective Comics* #374 there appears a newspaper in the background. The headline is barely readable, but the letters form the name *Irving Novick*. Place the covers of *Detective* #374 and Batman #201 next to each other and you will find that the figures of *Batman* are nearly identical! I'll place my bet on Novick as the mystery artist of *Batman* #201!

—Mark Dillman, Topeka, Kans.

(You win a *check*-mark, Mark, for correctly identifying the cover-artist—but a *wrong*-mark goes to another Mark on the story's writer.—*Editor*)

Dear Editor:

I'm going to guess that the story in *Batman* #201 was written by Mike Friedrich. If we begin with the so-obviously-drawn-by-Irv-Novick-cover, we see a trite, overused idea—the hero wanted by the police.

Now, if Gardner Fox has been assigned to write a story around that cover, he would've made it some fantastic trick on *Batman's* part. John Broome would've done the exact same thing as Fox. (Broome always does—I think those guys are Siamese twins!) Bill Finger stories are obvious 'cause he always puts some kind of giant object in them. (Pick up any pre-new look-*Batman;* chances are that some crook's robbing an exhibit where there are giant toys, clocks, musical instruments, etc.)

As the plot went, the writer took a trite cover and turned it into a trite plot with enough novel twists to make it the *best Batman* story in over three issues. (High praise, indeed!)

—Mark Evanier, Los Angeles, Cal.

(Sorry, story-wise it was Gardner Fox all the way.—*Editor*)

******

Dear Editor:

May I compliment you on a superb job in issue 201 of *Batman*. I've been waiting a long time to see a number of *Batman's* foes team up against him. But instead of being against him they were in the story to help him. Yes, the story line of "Batman's Gangland Guardians" intrigued me very much. I haven't enjoyed a *Batman* yarn as much since issue 180, with its outstanding "Death Knocks Three Times."

—David Combs, Burbank, Cal.

(From "superb" to "unbelievable"—that's the range of ratings on #201's story—as we graciously allow a famous femmefan to have the last word.—*Editor*)

******

Dear Editor:

Of all the unbelievable stories you have ever published, "Batman's Gangland Guardians" takes the cake! While I can swallow, with few doubts, the idea that *seven* of *Batman's* toughest, wiliest foes would gather together and work to save his life (of all the implausible things!), I find it *impossible* to believe that they could refrain from attempting a series of double-crosses. It is *absurd;* for *years* I've been reading about these villains and their congenital inability to "go straight". *Why* should the opportunity to save *Batman's* life preoccupy *all* of them to such an extent that none of them behaves as if they really *are* criminals they profess to be? These are *complex* people, all with a demonstrated ability to say one thing and do another. Being involved in honest work for a change isn't going to change *them* —certainly not all *seven* of them! Bring true to character traits means *more* than just a series of one-line speeches consisting of terrible puns that not even *Robin* would use!

— Irene Vartanoff, Lake Forest, Ill.

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Address communications to LETTERS TO THE BATCAVE, National Periodical Publications, 575 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y., 10022.

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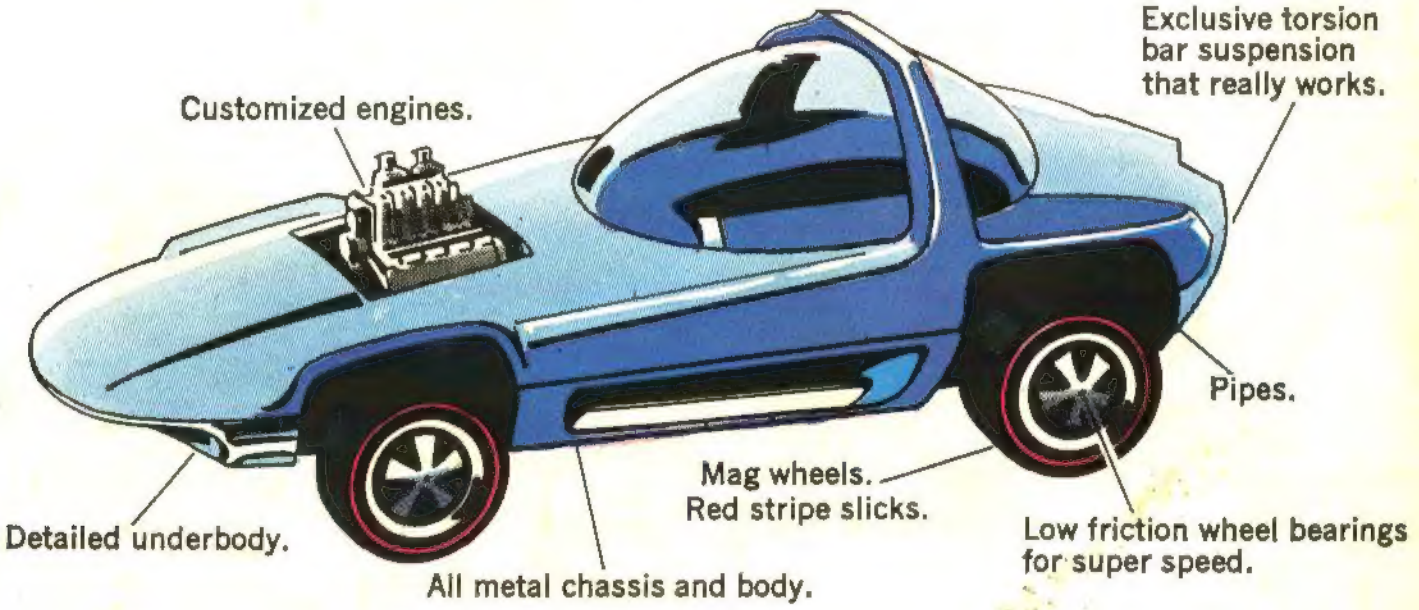

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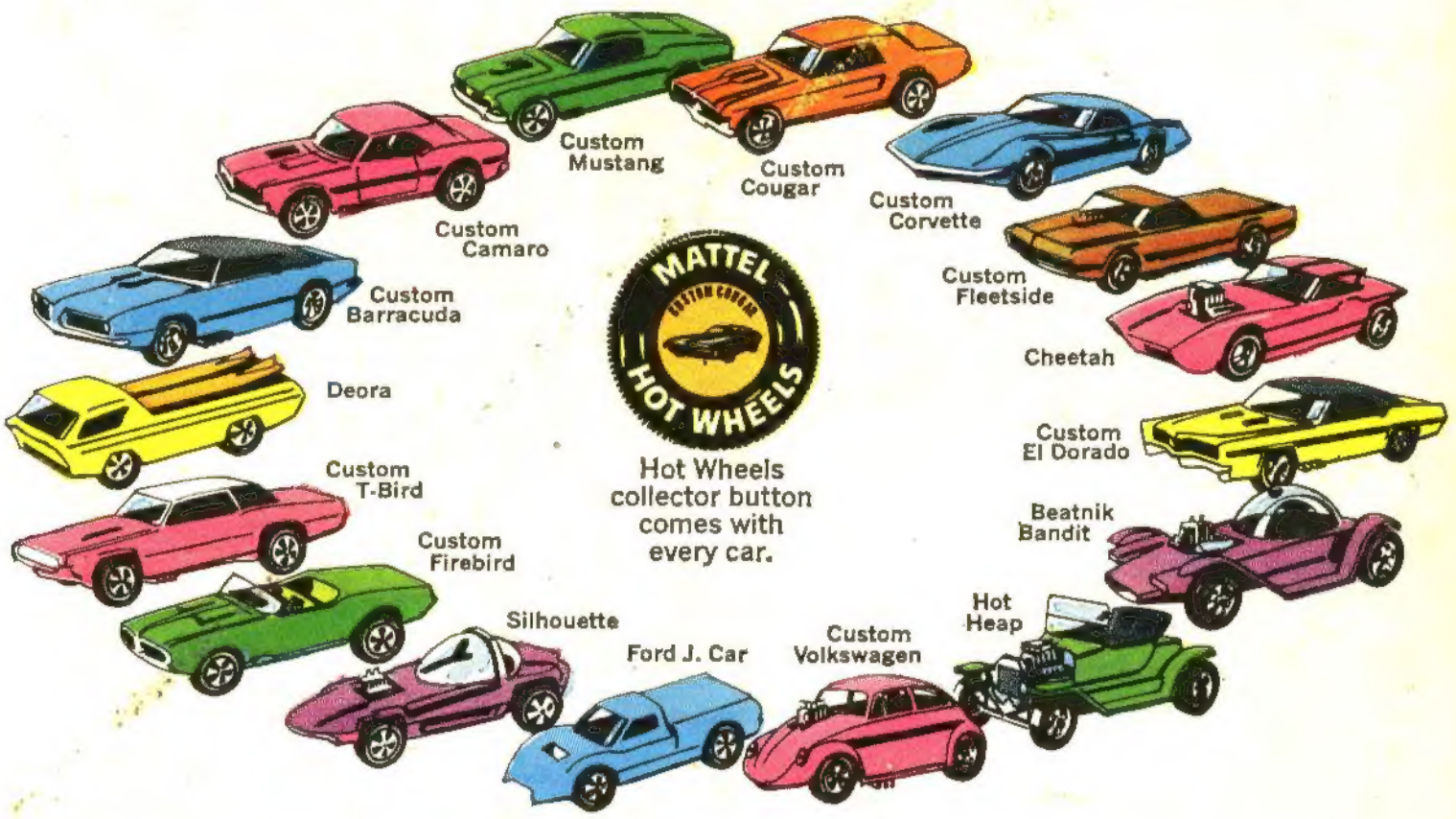

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